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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2009

US Embassy Ankara Media Reaction  
Prepared by Public Affairs Information Office on a daily basis

Media Highlights: Turkey Reluctant on Missiles; US Aid to Karabakh;  
Guantanamo; Scuffle Mars American Corner Opening; Trade with Turkey;  
DTP Tensions; Barzani Angry on DTP; Iran Mediation in Karabakh;  
Davutoglu on EU vs Middle East; Climate Change. Blogger Debates:  
GMOs; DTP Closure

#### How the US is Playing

Missile Shield and Turkey's Reluctance: Milliyet columnist Asli Aydinbas comments on Ankara's reluctance at joining a new NATO Missile Shield project. Despite ongoing Ankara-Washington bilateral discussions, Turkish government and military sources are reluctant, noting that "Turkish officials do not want to be in a cold war-alike atmosphere." A Turkish military official is quoted as saying "Russia and Iran will perceive this as threatening" and one government source says "what happens if the missile is blown over Turkey?" Noting concerns that a future missile shield could be directed at Iran, Aydinbas describes Turkey's approach as follows: "President Obama brought up the Missile Shield project during his meeting with PM Erdogan. Ankara, in return, asked for more information and a bilateral mechanism was established. At this point, Ankara awaits an official request from Washington and also looks for clarification on who will be the target for this project."

US Aid to Karabakh Stirs Debate: Mainstream Hurriyet's Moscow reporter writes about "the tiff over fiscal aid" between Washington and Baku. Azeri administration expresses anger over a Congressional mandate for 8 million dollars in aid to Karabakh because "Baku considers this decision as an indication of Washington's intention to recognize the Karabakh government." The report adds that the Azeri parliament also decided to protest the US over this issue, despite Washington's claims that the fiscal aid is for "supporting programs and activities in Karabakh."

Guantanamo Detainees in the US: Mainstream Sabah headline reads, "Guantanamo Detainees' New Home, Illinois," saying, "Thomson Correctional Center, a prison in Illinois will become a new home of approximately 100 detainees that now are imprisoned at Guantanamo,

Cuba." Islamist- oriented Zamanwrites, "Guantanamo Moves to the US," and notes, "US is having hard time for housing Gitmo detainees in other countries." In "Gitmo Prisoners Will Be Thomson Prisoners," liberal Radikal speculates "Obama who couldn't develop a formula to prosecute the prisoners in the US, won't be able to meet the Jan 2010 deadline for closing the Guantanamo."

Scuffle Mars American Corner Opening: Online stories from local websites in Turkey's southeast highlight the opening of a new American Corner at Gaziantep University and mention a small group protesting the event, describing the protests as provocation. Most coverage is positive, focusing on the opening of the American Corner; the rector's positive reception and the DCM's opening remarks and comments on nuclear issues, Israel and Palestine relations, and President Obama's Nobel Peace prize. Meanwhile, Milliyet online and local "guncelgazete" website highlight the intense security measures taken after the scuffle between police and students, as well as the types of anti-American slogans ("Go Home Yankees") displayed.

Turkish Businessmen Hopeful About More Trade with US: Commenting on Turkish PM's visit to Washington, Chairman of the Turkish American Businessman Association Ugur Terzioğlu expressed optimism for more trade in 2010. "There is a model partnership between the two countries which will pave the way to double the trade volume." The TABA Chairman also mentioned that American firms are interested in co-partnership model with Turkey in order to engage trade in Eurasia and the Middle East.

#### Other News

ANKARA 00001788 002 OF 003

Tension Over DTP Closure - "Time to Show Common Sense" (Cumhuriyet): All papers and TV channels report on the escalating tensions all over Turkey following the closure of the DTP by the Constitutional Court. Mainstream Vatan headline reads "Growing Danger" and reports that two people were gunned down by a shopkeeper during a demonstration in the eastern province of Mus yesterday. D Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet headlines the incident as "Time to Show Commonsense" and says that calls were voiced to avoid tensions and violent street protests right after the court ruling on DTP closure and after two people died during demonstrations in Mus. President of Workers' Union DISK Celebi said "we need commonsense today more than any other time. The parliament is the only platform to find solutions to problems. The government and the opposition parties should exert joint efforts." Mainstream Sabah says that civil activists are calling on DTP to return to the parliament and defuse the tensions on the streets. Mainstreams Hurriyet and Sabah report that PM Erdogan will discuss the latest incidents and growing tensions with his Ministers today at his office.

Barzani Voices Anger Over Turkish Ban on DTP (Milliyet): KRG leader Massoud Barzani on Tuesday slammed the Constitutional Court decision to ban main Kurdish party DTP and said he hoped the decision would not derail Ankara's efforts to solve the Kurdish issue. A statement released by the office of the President of Iraq's Regional Kurdish Administration reads: "The President's office expresses anger at the Turkish Constitutional Court's outlawing of the DTP and hopes that the Constitutional Court verdict will not halt the opening process."

Azerbaijan: "Iran can Mediate to Resolve Karabakh Issue" (Hurriyet): Azerbaijani FM Elmar Memmedyarov paid an official visit to Tehran the other day and met with his Iranian counterpart Muttaki. At a joint press conference following the meeting, the both ministers indicated that other than the Minsk group, Iran can mediate to find a solution to Karabakh issue. Muttaki quoted as saying "Iran is ready to extend necessary assistance in order to resolve the Karabakh issue." In response to Muttaki, Memmedyarov said "Iran is a stable country in the region. Stability has a great importance in order to establish dialog regarding the Karabakh issue. During our meeting we discussed many bilateral and regional issues. Of course, Karabakh issue had the top priority on our agenda. Our neighbor and brother Iran, on Karabakh issue, always stood by Azerbaijan with the statements it delivered in the international platforms at every opportunity. We know that in the future also, Iran will exert great

efforts to establish peace in the region."

Davutoglu: "EU and Arab Countries are not Alternative to Each Other" (Sabah): Speaking at Turk-Arab Forum in Damascus, FM Davutoglu said "We are aiming to contribute to develop security, stability and prosperity in the region and in the larger scale with our multi-dimensional, proactive and constructive foreign policy." Reminding at the forum that Turkey's relations continue with the EU as well, Davutoglu said "EU and Arab countries are not alternative to each other." In his speech, Davutoglu also called the Arab countries to improve their ties with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Climate Conference: In "Climate Summit Reaches Life and Death Point," liberal Radikal highlights "as Friday's summit finale arrives, the outcome is unclear," noting that "large-scale protests are expected" when ministers begin their discussions at the conference in Copenhagen on Dec 16. Aksam's senior columnist Utku Cakirozer says in, "Deals in Copenhagen But No Guarantees," that the actual climate change process will start after Copenhagen and that "all countries including Turkey will have hard bargaining to reduce their responsibilities until 2012 - when the agreement goes into effect."

Blogger Debates (friendfeed.com)

Turkish politics: "There is no way to resolve problems by closing political parties. They continue to exist only under different name

ANKARA 00001788 003 OF 003

tags and the mentality remains the same."

GMO: "There is an incredible amount of disinformation about GMO in Turkish media. Along with fanatical stories, editorial columns are also carrying wrong or distorted information. Maybe now is the time to fight against disinformation. Let's put a separate webpage to explain why GMOs are not bad at all."

SILLIMAN